

## **EPA Region 5 – *Partners for Asthma Action Recognition 2007*** ***Dane County Asthma Coalition***

**Background:** The Dane County Asthma Coalition (DCAC) began in the fall of 2005 when a group of nurses in the community saw a greater need for collaboration amongst organizations around asthma issues in the community.

The coalition is co-chaired by two nurse practitioners, Kathleen Kelly Shanovich and Sally Zirbel-Donisch. Kathleen is employed by the University of Wisconsin (Madison) Department of Asthma and Allergy and Sally is employed through Madison Metropolitan School District. Sally and Kathleen have extensive backgrounds working with children with asthma, and developing and participating in various community partnerships. In addition, Neal Jain MD, an allergist from the Dean Health System, is very invested in the Coalition and offers much guidance and direction.

**Partners:** Partnering programs include UW Health, UW Children's Hospital, Dean Health System, Group Health Cooperative, Dane County Parent Council/Headstart, Madison Department of Public Health, the Madison Metropolitan School District, Madison Parents of Children with Asthma, and other private organizations.

**Goals:** The Coalition's current priority is to standardize asthma treatment guidelines and educational materials in all four emergency rooms in Dane County, and to inform the primary care provider of the ER visit through faxed information encouraging them to see their client back in 5 days. The Coalition received funding from the Wisconsin Asthma Coalition to assist in implementing this program.

In addition, the Coalition would like to improve access to expert asthma care for school age children by offering school-based asthma clinics.

The Coalition is also performing asthma screenings and education for under/un-insured children in Dane County who are seen for well-child physicals at community organized "Neighborhood Well-Child Clinics". Eight clinics are held at a variety of locations throughout the school year servicing approximately 450 children.

Lastly, a goal is to improve overall asthma surveillance in Dane County.

**Achievements:** The DCAC received a Rotary Foundation Grant last March to purchase spirometry equipment for both asthma screenings of children and school-based asthma care.

The emergency room asthma treatment program was started in January at the UW Hospital ED. It has been very well received by providers.

**Challenges:** The major challenges faced during start-up were making sure we invited the appropriate players to the table and deciding on what project to implement. Many members had their own ideas of what the Coalition should be focusing their energies on. Data collection, including tracking of outcomes, of the emergency room asthma treatment program is also presenting separate challenges due to limited funding.

**Key Drivers and Program Areas:**

The Coalition is fortunate to have an involved and energetic group of partners from both public and private organizations. These partners have guided the coalition in assessment, planning and evaluation so we may meet our overall goal of improving the quality of life for all residents of Dane County with asthma.

Current program areas the Coalition is focusing on include clinical care (the emergency room program, asthma screenings of children and school-based asthma care), education (standardized asthma action plan, asthma information) and surveillance. The Coalition has also worked with various environmental groups in Dane County in writing letters of support for various projects.

**Contact Information:**

**Program Name:** Dane County Asthma Coalition (DCAC)

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